THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ) : (a) and (b) Frequent changes of Government since 1989 have unavoidably delayed the formulation of the Eighth Plan.

(c) Necessary steps are being taken now for very early finalisation of the Eighth Plan.

(d) The strategy of ensuring people's participation in the execution of rural development programmes through democratic decentralisation and revitalisation of Panchayat Raj institutions will constitute a major element of the Plan.

INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITIES IN RURAL AREAS

*72. SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKARA MURTHY : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have a proposal to improve infrastructure facilities in rural areas of the country;

(b) if so, the details of the programmes in this regard;

(c) whether the allocations for the said purpose would be enhanced; and

(d) if so, the extent to which the infrastructure facilities would be improved in rural areas of the country ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI UTTAMBHAI H. PATEL) : (a) and (b) Government recognize the need to improve the infrastructure facilities in rural areas. Under poverty alleviation programmes like Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) and State Sector Minimum Needs Programme (MNP), funds are provided for improving infrastructure facilities in rural areas. The details of action to be taken for further improvement will depend upon funds allocated under the Plan for this purpose.

(c) and (d) As the basic features including the size and shape of Eighth Five Year Plan are yet to be finalised, information in this regard is not available.

LIVE TELECAST OF CAR FESTIVAL OF LORD JAGANNATH OF ORISSA

*73. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY :

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal under consideration of the Union Government for live telecast of one of the important festivals of the country, i.e., the car festival of Lord Jagannath in Orissa; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (KUMARI GIRIJA VYAS) : (a) and (b) As per the existing policy and available technique, live TV coverages are limited to envents of nationwide topicality such as Republic Day Parade, Independence Day, International Conferences, important sports events, etc. For other important socio-cultural events, TV reports are prepared for subsequent telecast on Doordarshan. The Car Festival at Puri is also telecast on Doordarshan through a report in the national programme in addition to the news coverage on the same day.

(Translation)

REVISION OF GADGIL FORMULA FOR CENTRAL ASSISTANCE

*74. SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA : Will the Minister of PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether poverty index finds any place in the modified Gadgil Formula for Central Assistance to States;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the modified Gadgil formula, in its present form, has failed to check social disparities and to promote regional development; and

(d) whether the Government propose to revise the existing Gadgil formula so as to bring all round development of all the regions ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI H. R. BHARDWAJ) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Per capita income is included as one of the criteria to account for backwardness of the State relative to the nation.

(c) The formula has favoured the relatively backward States by inclusion of the criteria of population, per capita income and special problems.

(d) In the National Development Council meeting held in October 1990, revision of the modified Gadgil formula was announced. However, as many States expressed reservations about that revision, it is proposed to place the entire issue before the National Development Council for a final decision.

MISUTILISATION OF FUNDS UNDER J.R.Y.

*75. SHRI RAM PUJAN PATEL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether complaints have been received to the effect that a major portion of fund provided through Gram Pradhans for rural development under the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana is being misused; and

(b) if so, the steps taken|proposed to be taken by the Government to curb misuse of such funds ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY) :

(a) and (b) There are about 2.20 lakh Panchayats in the country. The funds are given to all the Panchayats as Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) is being implemented throughout the length and breadth of the country.

A few complaints have been received by the Government of India regarding misuse of Jawahar Rozgar Yojana funds provided to Gram Pradhans. Considering the number of Panchayats involved in implementation of the Yojana in the country, number of complaints regarding misuse of JRY funds by the Gram Pradhans are relatively very few. Whenever such complaints are received in the Ministry of Rural Development, they are referred to the concerned State Governments for appropriate remedial action.

The implementation of the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana is closely supervised and monitored by the authorities at the block, district and State headquarters in each State. The guidelines provide that each of the State Government should draw schedule of instructions prescribing minimum number of field visits for each supervisory level functionary from State down to block level.

Each of the State Governments, in addition, have their own system of checks and balances for proper control of grants given to the Panchayats as provided in their own Acts|Rules|Manual.

These measures prevent the possibility of misuse of grants by the Gram Pradhans|Sarpanches.

T.V. SECOND CHANNEL IN STATE CAPITALS

*76. SHRI V.S. VIJAYARAGHAVAN : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have any plans to set up second channels in T.V. Kendras in all State capitals including Trivandrum; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?